(i) A national workshop was conducted at the NICD in September 2001 for developing surveillance mechanism for pathogens with biological warfare potential including that of anthrax.

(ii) An issue of CD alert (monthly Newsletter of NICD) on bio-terrorism with special reference to anthrax was circulated in October, 2001 to all the concerned health authorities in different states and Union Territories. The issue also covered the guidelines to the followed during biological war/terrorism and effective handling of suspicious envelops/package.

(iii) Guidelines for packaging, transportation of clinical specimens and processing protocol in laboratories were circulated to all the Medical Colleges in the country;

(iv) A meeting on chemical and bio-terrorism was organized on 29th October by the Department of Health which was participated by the Secretaries of Home & Health. Director of Health Services from various States/ Union Territories. The representatives from the States informed the preparatory measures taken by them and assured availability of drugs in adequate quantity to tackle any situation as per their disaster management plan.

(v) National Institute for Communicable Diseases, Delhi has been identified as the nodal agency to for investigations of any specimen suspected for anthrax.

(vi) A round the clock control room is functioning at NICD from 19th October, 2001 where suspected envelops packages are being received for tests.

Kidney transplantation in the Capital

44. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that kidney transplantation market thrives in the Capital as reported in the Times of India, dated the 10th September, 2001; and

(b) the number of kidney transplants done in India during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) No, Sir. However, two cases of people selling their kidneys pertaining to Delhi have come to the notice during last one year and appropriate action is being taken by the Government of NCT Delhi.

(b) Under section 13(2) of the Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994, the State Governments are empowered to appoint by a notification one or more officers as Appropriate Authorities for the purposes of the Act. The information relating to the number of cases of kidney transplants should be available with such Appropriate Authority of State Government(s) concerned in whose jurisdiction such transplantation takes place. The Director General of Health Services has been appointed as the Appropriate Authority in respect of all Union Territories including the N.C.T. of Delhi.

Study on the working of the Traumatic Centres in the City hospitals

45. PROF. A. LAKSHMISAGAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any recent study about the working of the Traumatic Centres in the City hospitals to know how far they are equipped and capable to deal with emergency cases of accident victims;

(b) if so, the details thereof stating the hospitals lacking the essential requirements for the emergency department to deal with such cases; and

(c) the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Anthrax vaccine

46. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Anthrax scare has struck public during the last few months;

(b) if so, the steps taken to combat Anthrax;

(c) whether any vaccine/drug is available to treat Anthrax patients;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the steps taken to produce vaccine for prevention of Anthrax?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a)Yes, Sir.